1/15/75

Dear Jim,

Almost three weeks ago Jimmy wrote me a long letter I've not had time to answer. In it he again referred (not unfavorably, what I take to be favorably, as does Jim) to the projected interview. He had written Bud about this, said he enclosed a copy, but neither Jim nor I received this copy and, naturally enough, Bud has not referred to it. But he again made it clear that he left the decision to us collectively.

As soon as I can find time for the kind of response the letter requires, I'll be doing that and making further reference to this.

The immediate inspiration for this letter is catching Hefner on the AM TV news. I am without doubt about his seriousnessness and I do not think any but the most accomplished actor could put that kind of emotion on. I haven't yet gone out for the paper, so I am restricted to what TV reported and showed.

Had it not been for an unpleasant past with Playboy I'd have written Hefner as soon as I saw the story about Bobbie Arnstein's suicide because there is in this brief news account a name that means much to me, a man about whom I know much, none good. His involvement vibrated antennae. On this alone I'd have questions about what is up.

This past involves those no longer in Chicago, I think with the one exception, the man I mentioned to you, no longer with Playboy. It ranges from several unkept promises to what to me was both offensive and arrogant when I was there. It includes what was also costly to me, a request that I help with a good story. I was not paid for this and I did come up with some unusual material - still never published and perhaps enough for a book. I can't afford this and my experiences tell me that when I am abused this way those who do it justify it by thinking and speaking badly of me. So, I've stayed away.

I do not presume that you go right to the top there, but I also know nobody else who can approach anyone there. I think I can be of help and I'm willing to be.

Without knowing more than I've seen in the Washington Post (very little) and seen/heard on TV I can be underinformed. But based on this little knowledge and what I can project from it, I think that what I know of this person who figures in the investigation of the suicide can be of significance and what I know of the past - of a political nature - may have relevance and perhaps considerable importance.

So, this hasty note to let you know in the event you know anyone there who would like to talk to me. Probably best not by phone. I use mine freely, but not without the realization it is not in privacy.

The reason for the ellipsis is simple. I don't want to get into a situation where I'll be left as I was when I went to some effort and spent some time and money on request only to be left bearing costs I haven't yet been able to repay.

However, I think I can add another ellipsis: I can prove and have in my possession documentary proof of federal interest in what Playboy was doing, an interest in how it could be hurt, and more than a suggestion of help to one trying to hurt it.

Best regards,